



SHS ranked eighth state-wide

U.S. News and World Report recognizes top schools

The ratings have been released and Speedway High School once again has been recognized as a top high school in Indiana and the Indy Metro area. Each year, *U.S. News and World Report* reviews thousands of public, private, and charter schools nation-wide. Speedway High School students continue to demonstrate their collective excellence. In ratings released last month, Speedway ranked 8th out of 417 schools, and Speedway ranked fourth in the Indy Metro area for all public schools.

“We have much to be thankful for and much to be proud of,” stated principal James P. Claybourn. “It is apparent that we are unique in our student population as well as our students’ performance.”

Speedway ranks as the nation’s 544th highest performing school out of 17,843 high schools that were evaluated. Speedway’s rating of 96.95 was earned by assessing six categories:

College Readiness, Breadth of College Curriculum, State Test Proficiency, State Test Performance, Underserved Student Performance, and Graduation Rate.

Speedway trailed just three local schools (Herron, Zionsville, Carmel) by less than one full percentage point and finished ahead of larger suburban schools including Brownsburg, Avon, and Plainfield.

“We will demonstrate our commitment to providing our students with their diverse backgrounds, interests, and talents with the best education and preparation we possibly can,” stated Claybourn. “We will continue to prioritize every student, especially on the days when they bring less than their best, and prioritize every minute that we have the opportunity to help them improve their understanding and their likelihood of success after they leave us.”

“Each student is too important to do it any other way.”

Class of 2022 ready to flip the tassle

Commencement ceremonies scheduled for May 26th

Over 120 Speedway High School students will be receiving their diplomas signifying their graduation from Speedway. This year’s graduation ceremony takes place Thursday May 26th in the high school gymnasium. Last year’s ceremony was the first held in the newly air conditioned space.

Each senior was allotted eight tickets for family members and friends allowing for a more intimate and formal setting. Seniors have been asked to report to the cafeteria no later than 6:15 to prepare for the event.

We have arranged for a photographer to take photos before and during the event to capture memories. The photographer will be taking more informal pictures in the cafeteria beginning at 6 p.m. and the traditional photos upon receiving the diploma will take place during the ceremony. Photos will be made available to seniors via a link provided to seniors earlier this month. For more photo information, contact Derek Doehrmann at the high school.



*THANK YOU MRS. MOHL!
Senior AJ Dorton selected Amy Mohl as his Most Influential Teacher. They were both honored at the annual Academic Top Ten Celebration held just prior to Spring Break.*



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James A.

Allison

Elementary

This is a hard work zone

Students and teachers team up for successful results

By Claire Whittaker
Speedway Student Media

Recently I met with Principal Jay Bedwell of Allison Elementary to discuss the recent successes of the Math Bowl and Spell bowl teams this year.



Sarah Miller

The Indiana Math Bowl was a state competition, The Allison team finished in 3rd place, excelling in their academics. But there was even more academic success this year. On top of the Math Bowl competition, Allison's Spell Bowl team scored a 5th place finish in the state competition. This year's team consisted of 4th, 5th, and 6th graders.

In my interview, Bedwell shared that the team's success would have not been possible without the hard work of the students and of course the coaches. Allison's Math Bowl team was coached by Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. Miller, and the Spell Bowl team was coached by Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Simpson.



Liz Simpson

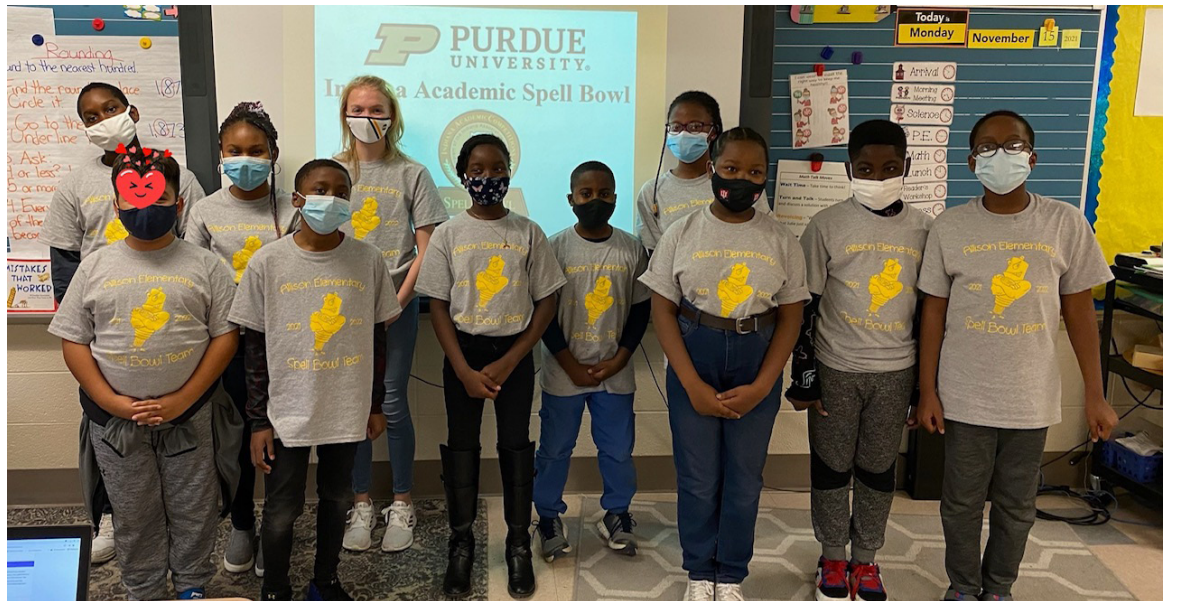
"The teams practiced twice a week after school from 3-3:30," said Bedwell. "Normally in the past, the team had been chosen by teacher recommendations, but this year the strong intelligent group of students participated in their own try-out to place on this high excelling state qualifying team." According to Bedwell, not only did the students absolutely excel, most of the team will be returning next year.



Kim Bennett



MATH BOWL: Alvan Akhigbe, Amanda Akhigbe, Mehm Dana, Trevor Humphrey, Jayden Moore, Al-Ameen Akewushola, Kingston Fry, Mason Pedraza, Daniel Ukute, Michelle Agboola, Anita Akhigbe, Ayomikun Idowu, Mehetabel Ukute, Manal Toukourou.



SPELL BOWL: Kehinde Lijoka, Jayden Moore, David Odejimi, Al ameen Akewushola, Shiloh Fadeyi, Daniel Ukute. Michelle Agboola, Paige Holbrook, Raphael Ndubuokwu, Maryjane Ohalete, Mehetabel Ukute.

Helpful arrivals make valuable impact on students

Every school receives some infused energy with the arrival of new people and Allison is no exception. When asking Bedwell about new arrivals in the school he really was grateful for the school's new secretary, Ms. Mulcahy. "She brings a whole new life into the building, she is always happy to be here with a smile on her face," observed Bedwell. He also noted the fantastic help from the new instructional coach Ms. Young, as well as Ms. McGuire on helping the enthusiasm levels within the children on helping out the school with such things as "Sparky's Closet and local food drives"



Syndi Mulcahy



Tracy Young

"One new thing brought into the school system this year was Parent Square," states Bedwell. "Parent

communication has always been a big priority in the school and this is easy access for everyone to know just what's going on. Our staff and parents love using it and the simple aspect of all information being located in one place."

In closing out my interview with my former principal, we talked about the things going on in the school as a result of the first full year back in school for the young scholars. He mentioned that "everyone is getting the hang of coming back full time." He loves seeing all the students' faces and thinks it's great that the kids can have social interactions with classmates and get back to group work/learning as it's a fundamental part of student growth.

Mr. Bedwell can't wait to be back in the fall, returning to see most of the students again, for another hopeful and successful year.



Dawn McGuire

Another Speedway success story

Functional Academics program continues to thrive

By Madison Beaudry
Speedway Student Media

On Friday, May 13th of 2022, I had the privilege of visiting my former Fisher principal, Betsy Snapp. Along with catching up, we also touched on many topics such as the Functional Academics Program that is based out of Fisher Elementary.

The Functional Academics Program started thirteen years ago. At the start of the program, there was only one class. However, over the years, this program has grown and is now flourishing. Mrs. Snapp stated that the program is intended to “expose students to an academic pace that is appropriate to them.”



Always serving up a smile. Functional Academics teacher Tammi Gregory has provided her students with great support in the Functional Academics program housed at Fisher. Photo courtesy of Fisher Elementary.

Sarah Maple and Tammi Gregory are the teachers. Both teachers have been leading this program for years and have led many students to success in and out of the classroom.

Snapp also stated some of the accomplishments that the students have included participating in sports such as cross country and track all while excelling in the classroom at the same time.



One on one time. Functional Academics teacher Sarah Maple works with third grader Josiah Robinson on a project. Photo courtesy of Fisher Elementary.

Through hard work by teachers and students, the Functional Academics Program provides the opportunity to flourish in an environment that is suited to students at their academic pace.

Returning to normal not always the easiest transition for students

Despite the challenges that the pandemic has brought to all of us in the past few years such as online school and limited social interaction, I was delighted to hear that Fisher Elementary has continued to grow and succeed.

Mrs. Snapp stated that many students have struggled with the transition from being online and then returning to the classroom. She also stated that just this year, one young student in particular who had originally struggled with the transition is now thriving socially and academically.

Mrs. Snapp stated that the staff regularly has meetings to share stories about the people and performances within the school. In a recent meeting, the teachers were elated to share that the kids have been knocking it out of the park and it's been a delight for the staff to see these incredibly bright students succeed.

Fisher Elementary has impacted so many students and past students such as myself. Mrs. Snapp stated that many former students that now attend the junior high regularly cross the hall to visit with their former teachers. The relationships that Fisher Elementary has helped create are ones that will be everlasting.

“The goal of Fisher is to create a fun and caring environment for all students in hopes of creating a place that students are excited to attend,” said Snapp.



Principal Betsy Snapp

Math Bowl team excels

Practice prepared students for competition success



Members of the Math Bowl team (listed alphabetically by grade): 6th grade: Isabelle Bigelow, Oliver Cecil, Lillian Luther, Jorden McCrum, Abigail Noblet, Catherine Pryor, Gracelyn Tinkey. 5th grade: Madiou Diallo, Breleigh Dinwiddie, Braylon Huntman, Jacob Lowery, Bismyer Noblet, Benjamin Polites, Della Young. 4th grade: Addisyn Luther, Leo Pryor. Coach: Michael Shoulders.

By Jackson Smith
Speedway Student Media

There have been many successes at Newby Elementary this year. Principal Lance Schnaus talked with me recently about the recent successes in the Math Bowl and advanced scores in iRead this year.

The Indiana Math Bowl, held at North Central High School, was a state competition that included competition in five different classes with 12-15 schools competing at the North Central location. Schools are competing across the state on the same evening.

Newby was placed in the green class, which considered overall enrollment and grade levels within the school. "There were approximately 115 elementary schools in that class and we came in second place," said Schnaus. "We couldn't be more proud of our students and their coach!"

The team practiced twice a week for about an hour from 3 to 4. There was a weekly assignment where they have to study a certain concept and the main focus area this year was geometry. Michael Shoulders was the coach of this year's team and he was even the Math Bowl coach when I was at Newby six years ago.

iRead scores improved this year

"What is iRead?"

iRead stands for Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination and it is a grade three reading assessment developed in accordance with the Indiana Department of Education. IREAD-3 is designed to measure foundational reading skills based on Indiana Academic Standards through grade three.

"I believe 32 out of 34 students passed the iRead test this year which is the highest percentage we've had in a while," said Schnaus. "This is a testament to our two 3rd grade teachers Mrs. DeFur and Mrs. Sims and the work that they have put in there."

Good behavior is also a priority in the Newby school community. PBIS is a relatively new addition to the Newby community and it means Positive Behavior Intervention Supports.

"Spark Student of the Month" highlights students who have shown respect, responsibility, etc. and gives the students the opportunity to be recognized in the main hallway of the building as their picture is put on the large glass wall, according to Schnaus. These students are representatives of the Newby community and role models for younger children to look up to. As a graduate of Newby, I couldn't be more proud to call myself a Newby alumni.

Frank H.

Wheeler

Elementary

Ready for life's next phase

Principal wrapping up career will be missed dearly

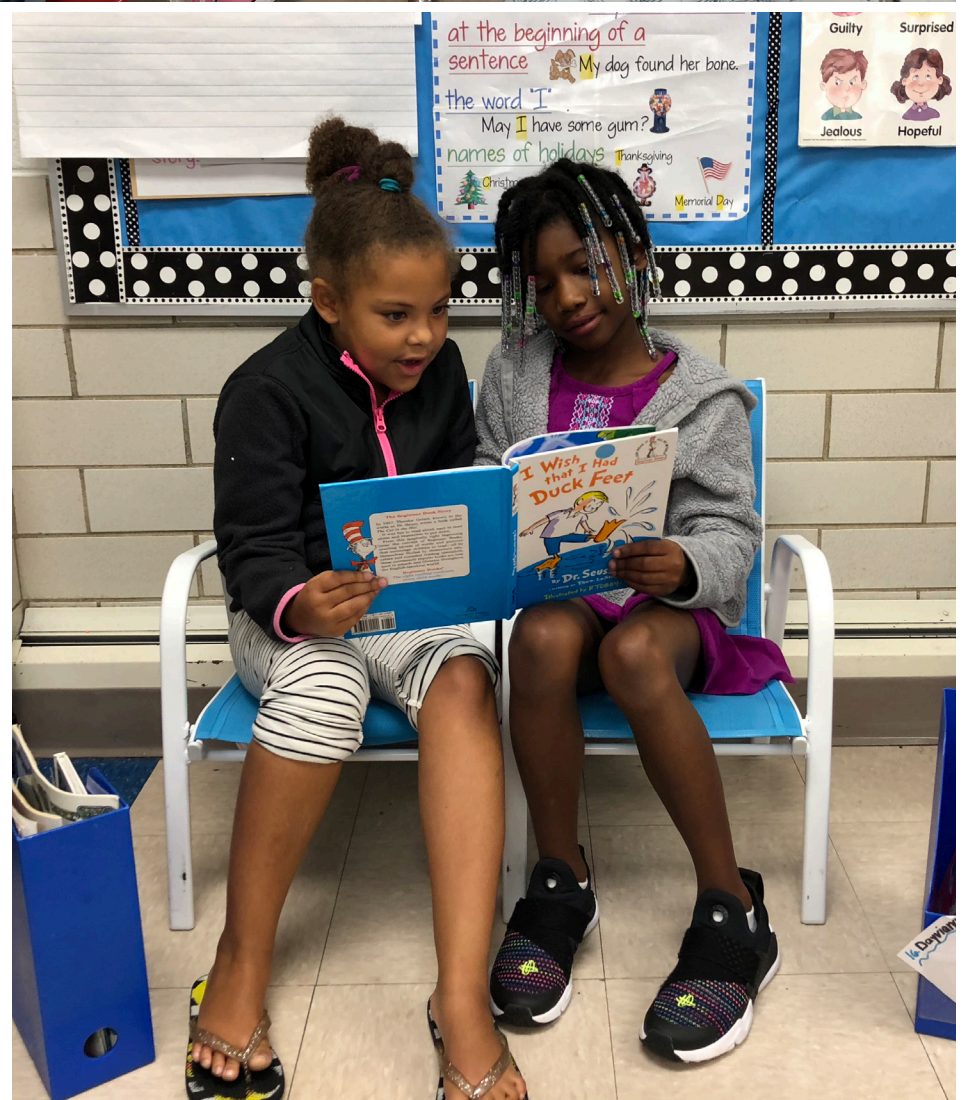
By Abigail Leek
Speedway Student Media

Dr. Brenda Wolfe, principal of Wheeler Elementary, is retiring at the end of this school year. This is Dr. Wolfe's 31st year in education, and it's her 15th year here at Speedway.

After obtaining her degree from Ball State University, Dr. Wolfe taught kindergarten in the Randolph Eastern School Corporation. Her first job as a principal was spent at St. John's Riedman Memorial in Hartford City where she spent the first half of the day teaching kindergarten and the second half in the role of principal.

Over the course of her career, she is most proud of "... making a difference for kids and helping support teachers to make that difference because [she] learned [she] couldn't do it [her]self," said Wolfe. Her future plans entail remodeling houses with her brother, sleeping in, spending time with her dog, Claire, and going to see her kids more often.

Dr. Wolfe will miss all of the kids and all of the hugs that come along with working at an elementary school.



Left: Retiring principal Brenda Wolfe is photographed with two of the three Wheeler teachers that have spent 25 or more years teaching in Speedway: Geoff Mahan, Jennifer Richmond. Not pictured: Lori Burkmire.

Above: Students at Wheeler loved working together, whether in small groups at round tables or in pairs practicing their reading skills. The Wheeler family was delighted to spend these learning hours together as they just went about their business each day. Photos courtesy Wheeler Elementary.

Speedway Jr. High

Making beautiful music

SJHS music program flourishes under Cronin's direction

By Jackson Golden
Speedway Student Media

Many programs are living in a rebuilding phase following the online learning years brought on by COVID-19. One of those programs is the Junior High Band and Choir. Junior high music director Amy Cronin said COVID completely knocked out the band due to her not being able to make the annual trip to the elementary schools. This trip to the elementaries allowed Cronin to showcase her program and talk with parents and students.



Fiona Humphrey

This year, Cronin had just 23 kids this year in the eighth grade band instead of their usual 50 or so. Despite the drop in numbers, they still found much success in this year's competition by winning a unanimous gold! "I treated it the same way I have every year," noted Cronin. "Without Mrs. Mohl to help last year, it was very difficult. I think success for our program lies in there being both of us to run the show."

47 students participate in the seventh grade band and Cronin expressed thanks to the special kids they have throughout the music program. The kids echo that sentiment. "Choir has been amazing, and so has Mrs. Cronin," said choir member Fiona Humphrey. "I feel like I've definitely gotten a lot better." Fiona also takes personal classes to get better at singing.



Alex Ruelas-Luz

"At first I was very hesitant to do band, but my mom made me," says Alex Ruelas-Luz, a member of the junior high Band. "I'm very happy I did though, I think it was a very good choice." Alex also marched with the high school band last year!

"It feels like it's finally going back to normal," noted Cronin. She is expecting the number of members in the band and choir to go back up to what they used to be before COVID, and it is likely with more people, the Junior High Band and Choir will continue to see much success in the future.

Good student, then good athlete? How about: good student-athlete?

It's not easy to excel in the classroom and maintain good grades year round. It's even harder to do this AND play multiple sports; however it seems to come easy to junior high student athletes Avery Mitchell and Macy DeLisle!



Avery Mitchell

Avery is an 8th grade multi-sport athlete who leads his teams in football, basketball, and baseball all while maintaining A's in the classroom. Macy leads her teams in volleyball and basketball and excels in the classroom as well. "Balancing school and sports is simple to me," says Avery. "That's one of my academic strengths, I'm naturally pretty smart." Avery did acknowledge he could be better at studying.

"I don't think I have any academic weaknesses," says Macy. "I don't struggle with balancing school and sports, sometimes it can be challenging but I have enough time for both school and sports." When asked about navigating challenges such as school and sports pull-

ing them in different directions, they said it didn't bother them!

"I've always done it growing up, playing multiple sports alongside school. I've just gotten used to it," says Avery. "Sometimes AAU can also be a challenge to work with," says Macy, "But I think it's really fun. I always have something to do!"

These two student athletes are both very dedicated to the classroom and their respective sports.

It's amazing the amount of things these two can do, especially at such a young age. When asked about staying focused and navigating classroom challenges during sports, Avery said he just "zones in" during sports. "I don't worry about anything else until after," said Avery.

Macy had a very similar response. "I don't worry about school while playing sports, I just focus on what I'm doing and don't worry about anything else until later."



Macy DeLisle



HAVING FUN IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL. The junior high cheer team loved sharing their spirit with the teams and the fans. And look at the effort of the boys on the football team creating a rushing lane for the running back. Photos courtesy Sarah Ackerman

Speedway Sparkles is produced by staff from the Student Media team at Speedway High School.

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More from SHS

Success ranges far and wide

Niche ranks Speedway tops in the state

Niche recently released its rankings. After evaluating high schools throughout Indiana, Speedway ranked **first** state-wide as a standout high school. What does that mean exactly?

The 2022 Niche Standout High Schools list recognizes public schools that are making a difference in their community. The ranking is based on rigorous analysis of key statistics and millions of reviews from students and parents using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Ranking factors include school diversity, graduation rates and state test scores for economically disadvantaged and minority students, SAT/ACT scores, and the quality of colleges that students consider. The list is limited to schools with at least 50% of students identified by the school as economically disadvantaged and a Niche Overall Grade of B or higher. Speedway ranked #7 out of 393 public high schools overall by Niche.



SUPERIOR EFFORT ON AND OFF THE FIELD. Speedway senior Jordan Davis was honored by the IHSAA as the recipient of the C. Eugene Cato Award. Jordan earned the award in honor of her service as a well-rounded individual, a positive role model demonstrating excellence in academics, school and community involvement, character, sportsmanship, and citizenship. With the honor comes a \$2500 scholarship.



A WALL OF EXCELLENCE. Speedway High School recently unveiled a new wall display honoring students earning qualifying scores on AP tests. The wall recognizes students from 2011 - 2021 and will be updated each summer.



THE GIFT OF MUSIC. Alisdair Curts plays the saxophone as part of the jazz and concert bands at Speedway. It was an outstanding year for the music department. The 500 Regiment Marching Band earned its highest score ever at the State Fair annual competition while individuals and groups earned numerous GOLD ratings at music competitions by ISSMA.



PROVIDING A GREAT SERVICE FOR ALL. The students in Courtney Wilkerson's Functional Academics classes with the help of the Speedway and Indianapolis community debuted Sparky's Pantry this year. The program has provided food for over 350 Speedway Schools' families. Students in these classes prepare pantry items that were distributed every other Thursday this year.



TAKING IT NEXT LEVEL. Earlier this week, senior Eli Givens signed his letter of intent to run track at Marian University. Sparkplugs athletes from the Class of '22 will be represented at the college level in girls golf, boys soccer, football, girls basketball, and track next fall.